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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/803,037	03/12/2001	Yasushi Ohwa	016907/1210	8414

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Johnny A. Kumar
FOLEY & LARDNER
Washington Harbour
3000 K Street, N.W., Suite 500
Washington, DC 20007-5109

EXAMINER

TRAN, DOUGLAS Q

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2624

DATE MAILED: 06/14/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/803,037

Applicant(s)

OHWA, YASUSHI

Examiner

Douglas Q. Tran

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on Amendment on 1/6/05.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-8, 12, 18 and 19 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 9-11, 13-17, 20 and 21 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☒ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.

- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

2. Claims 1, 3-8, 12, and 18-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Danknick (U.S. Patent No. 6,192,202).

As to claims 1, Danknick teaches a control apparatus (110 in fig. 1) of an image forming system (fig. 1), comprising:

an interface (205 in fig. 2) which performs data communications with another device connected to a network (160 in fig.1);

a management table which manages an operation state of each of image forming apparatuses (130, 112a and 112b in fig. 1) connected to the network (col. 5, lines 55-64);

a controller (255 in fig. 2) which, when a printing request for a tandem print job that corresponds to one print job that is distributed to the image forming apparatuses to complete the one print jobs is received (col. 5, lines 4-12), prepares a schedule in which the tandem print job is distributed to the image forming apparatuses connected to the network based on the operation state of each of the image forming apparatuses, and transmits a content of the printing that is executed by each of the image forming apparatuses according to the schedule (310, 315, 320, 325, and 330 in fig. 3 or 530, 535 or 540 in fig. 5 and col. 5, lines 56-64).

As to claim 3, Danknick discloses every feature discussed in claim 1, and further The control apparatus of the image forming system according to claim 1, wherein the schedule is prepared when at least one of the plurality of image forming apparatuses is set in a printable state (325 in fig. 3 or 535 in fig. 5).

As to claim 4, Danknick discloses every feature discussed in claim 1, and further teaches wherein the schedule is prepared by assigning part of the tandem print job to an image forming apparatus under execution of a print job other than the tandem print job such that the tandem print job is completed within a shortest time period using the plurality of image forming apparatuses (col. 5, lines 50-52).

As to claim 5, Danknick discloses every feature discussed in claim 1, and further teaches the controller provides an originator of the tandem print job with information representing a schedule of the tandem print job (col. 7, lines 43-44 and col. 6, lines 15-25).

As to claim 6, Danknick discloses every feature discussed in claim 1, and further teaches the control apparatus of the image forming system according to claim 1, wherein the controller provides an originator of the tandem print job with information representing a progress of the tandem print job (col. 7, lines 43-44 and col. 6, lines 15-25).

As to claim 7, Danknick discloses every feature discussed in claim 1, and further teaches the controller provides an originator of the tandem print job with information representing an amount of printing that has been processed and an amount of printing that is to be processed (col. 7, lines 43-44 and col. 6, lines 15-25).

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As to claim 8, Danknick discloses every feature discussed in claim 5, and further teaches a memory which stores information for identifying the originator of the tandem print job when the tandem print job is received (col. 6, lines 15-25).

As to claim 12, Danknick discloses every feature discussed in claim , and further teaches the controller provides an originator of the tandem print job with options of combinations of image forming apparatuses to execute the tandem print job, and prepares a schedule of the tandem print job in accordance with one of the options selected by the image forming apparatuses or the external device (col. 4, lines 64-67).

As to claims 18-19, Danknick teaches the method of performing the apparatus claims 1 and 6 as indicated above.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Danknick as applied to claim 1, and further in view of Kato (U.S. Patent No. 6,771,386 B1).

As to claim 2, Danknick disclose every feature discussed in claim 1.

However, Danknick does not teaches one of the plurality of image forming apparatuses includes the control apparatus, and the image forming apparatus including the control apparatus

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serves as a master apparatus, while the image forming apparatuses other than the master apparatus serve as slave apparatus.

Kato, in the same view of endeavor "printing system", teaches one of the plurality of image forming apparatuses includes the control apparatus, and the image forming apparatus including the control apparatus serves as a master apparatus, while the image forming apparatuses other than the master apparatus serve as slave apparatus (col. 11, lines 31-37).

It would have been obvious to modify the printers of Danknick in which one of printers serves as a master and other are slave as taught by Kato. The suggestion for modifying the printing system of Danknick can be reasoned by one of ordinary skill in the art as set forth above by Kato. Such a modification would increase the function of printing system so that the user can keep track and control the tandem print job at the master printer.

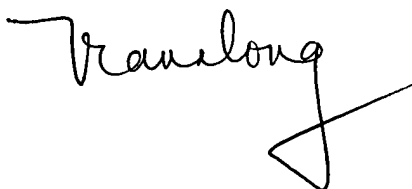
Allowable Subject Matter

5. Claims 9-11, 13-17, 20-21 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Contact Information

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Douglas Q. Tran whose telephone number is (571) 272-7442 or E-mail address is douglas.tran@uspto.gov.

Douglas Q. Tran
June 10, 2005

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tran Douglas", with a stylized flourish at the end.